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ABSTRACT

Very little research has been done on first or second language acquisition in the Philippines. Most second language learning studies cited in the literature concern acquisition of English in English-speaking communities, and most American studies of Filipino language acquisition are superficial, consisting primarily of morpheme analysis. The Philippines are an excellent laboratory for language acquisition studies because of the multilingual context. Within the country, research on the nature of Filipino language acquisition is a top priority, because 60 to 70 percent of Filipinos are non-Tagalog speakers. Also, most non-Tagalogs learn two languages simultaneously: one at home and the other (Pilipino) taught in school and used in the community. Research in early childhood bilingualism in this situation would be revealing. Philippine data could also be used to study universals in second language acquisition for development of a general theory. (MSE)

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STUDIES IN FILIPINO SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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STUDIES IN FILIPINO SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Introduction

Learning a second, third, fourth and even a fifth language is a way of life among the majority of Filipinos. The language situation in the Philippines is complex. There are an estimated 75 to 150 languages and dialects in the country, eight of which are major languages and three regional (Ilokano, Tagalog and Cebuano). English has been the medium of instruction since the coming of the Americans. Pilipino (or Tagalog) was elevated to national language status in 1940; but recently, after the Constitutional Convention of 1973, it was relegated to being one of the two official languages, the other being English. Yet, even President Marcos, as well as Philippine educators, still refer to Pilipino as the national language.

I. English as Medium of Instruction

Sibayan (1978) describes the present situation thus:

> "If a pupil is a Tagalog speaker in an urban setting like Manila he learns English in school, may speak some English at home, and exposed to partial medial (partial because several TV program movies, radio broadcasts, and printed materials, especially comics, are in Pilipino) [sic]. If the Tagalog-speaking child comes from a remote rural community, then he learns and speaks English only in school. On the other hand, if he is a non-Tagalog-speaking pupil and the language of instruction is English, and he studies in an urban setting like Cebu, he learns English in school and has partial media [sic] but it is doubtful if he speaks English or Pilipino at home. If he comes from a remote rural setting, then he hears and learns English only in school."

However, with regard to Pilipino, there is an emerging group of "new" Filipinos. This is the group whose members come from non-Tagalog-speaking families or regions. They acquired Pilipino in school, and the use of Pilipino was reinforced outside school. Many of these may even speak Pilipino like natives but still consider themselves non-Tagalogs. Their acquired Pilipino is even better than that of their Manila counterparts who use a lot of English words and phrases in their speech.

A. The Iloilo I Experiment

In 1957, the vernacular began to be used as the medium of instruction in the first two grades of public schooling. This change came about following the results of the Iloilo I Study in 1948-1954. The experiment proved the superiority of the vernacular as the language of instruction in the initial stage of education in terms of what the child should learn and of his social growth.

In its 1950 report, however, the UNESCO Consultative Educational Mission wrote that the Filipino child was over-burdened by learning more than two languages: the vernacular, Pilipino and English.

Before 1957, English was taught as a first language and was the only medium of instruction. Due to the Prator recommendation in 1950, English began to be taught as a second language.

B. The Rizal and Iloilo II Experiments

The Rizal and Iloilo II experiments were conducted to evaluate the effects of varying the introduction of language instruction in the primary schools. These were two well-designed, large-scale experiments (Davis 1967) conducted jointly by the Philippine Center for Language Study and the Bureau of Public Schools in 1960-1966.

The Rizal experiment involved thirty teachers and 1,490 pupils in thirty schools for six years. This study showed that: (1) it is advisable to introduce reading in English in Grade 1 (in the fourth month), instead of Grade 2 as advocated by a number of authorities in the field of second-language teaching; and (2) of the three schemes in the use of English and the vernacular in the first six years of school, (a) pupils taught in an all-English curriculum in Grades 1 to 6 produced the best results; (b) those taught in the vernacular for four years and then English in Grades 5 to 6 were the next best; and (c) pupils taught in the then prevailing scheme of two years in the vernacular and English in Grade 3 thorugh 6 came out the poorest.

Apparently, the results of the Rizal experiment have not been considered seriously by those who were responsible for the Bilingual Educational Policy of 1974. The policy calls for the use of Pilipino and English as media of instruction. Pilipino is the medium of instruction in social studies, social science, character education, work education, health education, and physical education. English is the medium of instruction for math and science.

The other experiment, the Iloilo II Study, justified the use of the vernacular and the simultaneous teaching of two second languages, English and Pilipino, in non-Tagalog-speaking provinces. This study contradicts the Iloilo I experiment by disproving the notion that the teaching or use of three languages simultaneously would confuse the child.

Again, the Bilingual Education Policy of 1974 ignored the results of the Iloilo I and II experiments by deciding to have a bilingual education program with the use of Pilipino and English as media of instruction, beginning in Grade I in all schools. According to this policy, the vernacular would be used "only when necessary to facilitate understanding of the concepts being taught through the perscribed medium for the subject; English, Pilipino (or Arabic) as the case may be."

II. Studies on Attitude and Motivation in the Acquisition of English

The role of attitude and motivation in the acquistion of a second language was investigated in the studies by Castillo (1969), Feenstra and Castillo (1970), and Castillo and Galang (1973). The major results of the Castillo study indicated that attitudinal and motivational factors were very important in successfully acquiring a second language. The subjects appeared to share their parents' attitudes toward language learning. Parents who held positive attitudes toward Americans tended to have children whose academic performance in school was superior. In another study conducted in Baguio, Cebu and Negros Oriental, Castillo (1972) observed that where students' and parents' attitudes conflicted, success in English learning was affected negatively. The Castillo study (1969) showed how extreme authoritarianism, ethnocentrism, emotional uncertainty, and conflicting allegiance can deter one from successfully acquiring a second language. While the Castillo study (1969) concluded that parents may be instrumentally or integratively motivated or both in choosing English for their children, who seem to share the same types of attitudes. Feenstra and Castillo found that the major motivation for learning English apears to be instrumental.

Galang (1977) makes an important observation on the types of orientation revealed by Filipino subjects:

> Whereas in studies done in Canada and the United States, the integrative component is clearly associated with success in the second language, in the Philippine Studies, no such clear-cut relationship exists. Both types of orientation can be equally important in the process of acquiring a second language.

III. English Language Choice and Use

The preliminary results of the National Media Production Center's nationwide survey (1977) indicated the following: "Tagalog (Pilipino) and English seem to be the two language most widely understood, spoken, read and written by (the) majority of the respondents aside from their native languages."

The Pascasio and Hidalgo study (1973) found that more Pilipino than English is used in the home, in casual conversation, and in asking and giving information; more English than Pilipino is read in school; English and Pilipino are used equally in social gatherings.

The Pascasio study (1973) stated that in an interaction, cues on language choice usually emanated from the superordinate participant. Another finding was that limited skills in one or the other language may determine language choice.

What a bilingual often does is express an idea effortlessly by mixing the two languages. Where Pilipino lacks a more precise term, English is used to fill the gap and vice-versa. To the Filipino bilingual, a combination of English and Pilipino, rather than one or the other, has become a natural way of speaking and expressing ideas more clearly.

The nature of the subject matter in a converation may determine the language choice, too. A Filipino bilingual often talks about personal matters in Pilipino and about impersonal matters in English. He talks about his family and home activities in Pilipino but switches to English when the conversation shifts to topics like international and national events.

IV. Code-switching and Lanuage-mixing

Code-switching and language-mixing occur frequently among Filipino bilinguals. The Barrios, et. al., study (1974) showed that Tagalog-English bilinguals use a "mix-mix" language, either predominantly Tagalog or predominantly English, depending on such factors as area, interlocution and topic.

In a preliminary analysis I did on samples of speech by educated Tagalog speakers (1971), I noted that code-switching from English to Tagalog and vice-versa occurs not only on the sentence/clause level but also on the phrase/word level. By analyzing the segments in a sentence, one can determine if it is English-structure-based ("Engalog") or Tagalog-structure-based ("Taglish"). One can also measure the speaker's preference for either language by the frequency of occurrence of either language in his speech as well as the direction of his shifts to one particular language. Most Filipinos, especially those who are Manila-based, are most comfortable using "Taglish" with their peers. In formal situations, such as job-related activities, the "Engalog" type of language is often used.

The most comprehensive linguistic study on code-switching is Bautista's "A Model of Bilingual Competence Based on an Analysis of Tagalog-English Code Switching" (1975). The model she constructed to represent the

linguistic competence of the Filipino bilingual has two co-existent systems, not just one linguistic system with only one semantic component having projection rules which are seen to apply cross-linguistically.

V. Second Language Acquisition Studies of Filipino Children

A. Morpheme Studies

In recent years, studies on acquisition of language has produced a large body of literature and some significant advances in our understanding of the developmental process as well as of the strategies involved in mother-tongue acquisition. However, surprisingly little basic research into the processes and strategies of second-language learning has been conducted.

Much of second-language acquisition research depends on various morpheme studies that have resulted in the indication of a "natural order" of (morphemic) acquisition. The subjects are usually Hispanic students learning English as a second language. There are very few morpheme studies on Asian subjects. There are only about four, mostly cross-sectional studies, that involve Filipino children. Three are comparative studies. The acquisition patterns of these children were compared with those of monolingual English-speaking children acquiring their first language (L1). Comparisons were also made of the English-language acquisition patterns of children in other language groups.

A doctoral study recently completed at the University of Texas at Austin by Betty Mace-Matluck investigated the order of acquisition of certain oral English structures by children speaking Spanish, Cantonese, Tagalog and Ilokano who were learning English as a second language (L2)

between the ages of five and ten. The acquisition patterns of these children were compared with those of monolingual English-speaking children acquiring their first language (L1). The results of the study revealed a low degree of correspondence between the acquisition patterns of L1 and L2 learners, but a rather high correspondence among those of the second-language learners.

Four hundred and forty-two students, from kindergarten through grade 4, from two school districts in the state of Washington were involved in the study. All the students were tested bilingually with the MAT-SEA-CAL oral proficiency tests (Matluck-Matluck, 1974). From the language data obtained from the English edition of these tests, twenty-six test items containing ten grammatical morphemes for which first-language acquisition order had been established previously (Brown, 1973) were isolated for study.

On the basis of the mean percentage of correct responses, from a total of approximately 11,000 utterances in which the identified morphemes were expected to occur in obligatory contexts, rank orders of the ten morphemes were obtained for groups of children as defined by the variable categories of home language background, grade, and English-language proficiency level.

The results of the analyses that examined the relationship between first language (L1) and second language (L2) rank orders were as follows:

1. All correlations were nonsignificant on the basis of home language background. The value of the correlation coefficients ranged from .25 to .49.

2. Except for Spanish kindergarten, all correlations were nonsignificant on the basis of grade level. The value of the correlation coefficients ranged from .05 to .65. Scrutiny of the data revealed that the Spanish kindergarten L2 rank order differed from the L1 sequence in some important ways.

3. All correlations were nonsignificant on the basis of proficiency level, except for Cantonese Proficiency Level I. The value of the correlation of the data revealed major differences between the L1 rank order and that obtained for the Cantonese-speaking Proficiency Level I students.

The resuts of the six analyses that examined the relationships between the L2 orders obtained on the basis of home language background revealed:

1. All L2 rank orders correlated significantly. The value of the correlation coefficients ranged from .71 to .99.

2. Inspection of the data showed, however, that in spite of a high degree of correspondence, there were some major differences across all of the L2 rank orders, except for those who spoke Cantonese and Tagalog, among whom only one reversal occurred.

While the Matluck study specifically affirmed the noncorrespondence of L1 and L2, the three other studies emphasized the similarity of order of acquisition between L1 and L2.

Day, et. al., (1977) made a study of the order of difficulty of standard English grammatical features among cultural/language minority groups. One of the language groups was that of "Pilipino" children in the western United States. Of the eleven samples (ten different culture/language groups) for whom data were reported, five spoke a dialect of English including standard English (Anglo American, Hawaiian American--Los Angeles, Hawaiian Creole speakers, Black American, and Hawaiian American--Honolulu) and six (Pima Indian, Mexican American, Japanese, Filipino, Korean and Chinese) spoke English as a second language. The children in two of the samples were second graders; the rest were tested in early fall in kindergarten or in the summer prior to their entering kindergarten. The Filipino children came from Los Angeles.

The study used the Standard English Repetition Test (SERT). The measure consisted of 29 grammatical features of standard English (SE) embedded in sentences selected from samples of child speech recorded in natural settings. The technique used was controlled elicited imitation, i.e., the child was instructed to repeat standard English sentences which the examiner said to him. This simple and economical method is based on the assumption that a child who understands a sentence, and/or who is familiar with its syntax, phonology, and vocabulary, will be more likely to repeat the sentence accurately than one who does not.

While several studies on the use of elicited imitation have focused on assessing in general terms children's performance levels in standard English, there have been no comparative studies of order of feature difficulty. Though limited in the range of SE features tested, the SERT results for eleven diverse samples clearly suggested that there is a general order of difficulty among selected SE grammatical features. Difficult SE features for Anglo children were, in relative terms, also difficult for the other groups; easy items for Anglo children were also easy for the rest. There appear to be no differences in the order of feature difficulty associated with ESL or dialect status, nor between kindergarteners and second graders. The Anglo children, as expected, obtained the highest SE performance score, for the Anglo sample was the only one for which there was no evidence of ESL or nonstandard dialect status.

B. Error Analysis Studies

The third study which included Filipino children was conducted in Manitoba, Canada. Farbis (1978) conducted a case study of seven children

learning English as a second language to explore the hypothesis that second language learning is a creative process, governed by an innate language mechanism which proceeds automatically regardless of the environment in which the second language is being learned.

The subjects for the study ranged from eight to ten years of age, belonged to three different Asian language backgrounds (Tagalog, Cantonese, Korean) and were learning English in a formal environment. An oral test, in the form of a conversation about a picture story, was administered at one month intervals over a six-month period. The subjects' acquisition orders were very limited but did show similarities. Error analysis revealed the operation of many strategies including holophrase learning, overgeneralization, simplification, avoidance, transfer of training and native language interference. Subjects showed a definite preference for forms which follow a regular pattern, are easily perceived and which can be memorized as holophrases.

The similarity in subject performance in this study supports the hypothesis that an innate mechanism directs second language acquisition while the use of a variety of learning strategies suggests that second language learning is a creative process.

There are limits to the strength of generalizations which can be made about L2 acquisition when they are based only on the study of order of acquisition of morphemes. In short, there is more to language than a few isolated morphemes. The following two studies were conducted in Hawaii and used only Filipino K-3 children as subjects.

In my study of English language acquisition by Filipino immigrant children in Hawaii, I tried to go beyond the order of morpheme acquisition by studying the strategies in learning resorted to by recently arrived Filipino students.

The subjects were 36 K-3 Filipino students aged 5-8 years. The tests employed were Dulay and Burt's Bilingual Syntax Measure (1975) and Mace-Matluck's Listening Comprehension and Structure Response Tests (1974). These tests have been used in most cross-sectional studies in English as a second language; comparative studies will be made at some future time.

I was interested in the role errors play in revealing the processes resorted to by the child in learning the second language. I used the tests more as an elicitation device rather than as an evaluator of language proficiency. I was also interested in examining the order of acquisition of certain English morphemes (e.g., inflections, articles, prepositions, etc.) from the children's responses.

The tests were administred twice to obtain cross-sectional as well as some developmental data. The two tests provided us with controlled data--that is, specific responses and discrete items. Samples of free speech or extended discourse would also be useful. Therefore, during the second testing phase, the children were asked to retell familiar stories with picture books as cues. The subject would leaf through a book about the Three Bears and tell the story.

From the responses, grammatical errors were extracted and classified into various categories such as: (1) developmental errors similar to first language acquisition errors; (2) interference errors due to influence of the native language of the subject; (3) ambiguous errors that are similar to both (1) and (2); and (4) unique errors that are neither (1) nor (2). Relative frequencies of the errors were tabulated.

A morpheme is said to be acquired if 90% of the subjects can use it correctly in at least three instances where it occurs obligatorily in each child's responses.

The tentative findings of this study appear to show some similarity of sequence of acquisition with that of first language learners except for the early acquisition of articles (probably due to positive transfer from the native language).

Findings of the study also bore out some of Hatch's (1974) generalizations on universals of second language acquisition and Slobin and Brown's findings from first language data. It was noted that forms of low phonetic saliency (e.g., -'s, -'ed), low semantic content or semantically unimportant forms (e.g., auxiliaries, copula, inflections) and redundant forms, that is, forms whose omission will not result in serious misunderstandings (e.g., copula, auxiliaries, -'s plural inflection) are slow in being acquired.

Apparently, a communication strategy is being applied by second language learners. The second language is being simplified to eliminate confusing forms in order to communicate without excessive hesitations and get the message across with the least interference. Conversely, the frequent use of semantically important words such as nouns and the base forms of the verbs in most responses supports communication as an important goal of second language acquisition.

The early appearance of the 'ING verb form is a counter-example to the generalization of the late appearance of forms having low semantic power. It is possible that this form occurs frequently in the input data. It was noted, however, that the appearance of the form is no guarantee of the

child's having learning the concept of ongoing action. The subjects used -ing forms in many senses before the meaning or function was narrowed down to the standard progressive usage. Linguistically complex concepts such as agreement and tense occurred very late in the subjects' responses.

As mentioned earlier, most of the errors committed were similar to developmental errors, though some of the distinctions, such as the omission of the plural inflection, the lack of agreement between subject and predicate and the omission of the copula are not important in Philippine languages and, therefore, could also be categorized as ambiguous. What is difficult to explain about the preliminary findings is that comparable Hawaiian subjects, as revealed in previous studies on second language acquisition, acquire most of these morphemes much later.

After the first test, only the article, mostly the, was acquired by the subjects as a group. The second test, administered after one year, revealed that only one other morpheme, the 'ing verbal inflection, was acquired. A further examination of the data revealed that certain constructions were neither standard English nor English developmental errors. They were constructions common in Hawaii Creole or pidgin (e.g., wen for the past morpheme; gon for future; negative construction no, not, nomore, nevah; get for 'have' and stay for copula 'be'). This development strongly supports the communication strategy applied by second language learners. My hypothesis is that the children are learning two dialects of English unconsciously and that the predominant one (Hawaiian Creole or pidgin), which is the language of peers in this area, is an important factor in delaying the subjects' acquisition of standard English.

If this is really the case, teachers and curriculum writers need to make the children aware of the fact that they are learning two dialects,

each with its own use, and that since both are important they should be able to use the languages in the right domains--Hawaiian Creole with their peers and standard English in the classroom.

The main limitation of my study, I believe, is my lack of input data. I have no solidly validated data that show what causes the acquisition or non-acquisition of the language forms and their functions. It seems to me a detailed discourse analysis of the language of the classroom as well as peer interaction would be most revealing of the processes applied by children in learning a second language.

The above research is very exploratory in nature. There is at present a pressing need for research of this kind in Hawaii. An initial detailed comparative study across four or more Asian linguistic background and with children of Hispanic backgrounds would be an important contribution to the literature on second language acquisition. While a number of studies deal with the latter, practically none exists for the former.

A quick perusal of L2 research results will demonstrate that there are conflicting conclusions drawn by different studies as to the nature of the cognitive processes underlying L2 acquisition. Some conclude, for example, that language transfer has a negligible influence on L2, while others conclude that language transfer (together with other influences) is important in shaping L2.

Tharp (1976) made a contrastive analysis of the structural errors observed in the transcriptions of the story-telling portions of the Hawaii Bilingual/Bicultrual Education Program Placement Test in Language Arts. The subjects' speech ranged from standard English to Hawaii English to Philippine English and in many cases exhibited characteristics of all three types. Errors observed were classifed into various structural categories

and their relative frequencies established. The categories were arranged in a descending order of frequency. The most frequent structural error was the omission of the articles a, an, and the. Lack of number agreement between subject and verb was also extremely common, as were incorrect plural formations and plural constructions. Quite common was the occurrence of a simple uninflected infinitive verb form instead of the more complex progressive form. Tharp concludes that several of the error types cited above may be considered related in their reflecting the subjects' failure to assimilate three basic distinctions in standard English.

The omission of articles and inclusion of superfluous articles, the lack of number agreement between subject and verb, the use of incorrect plural forms and plural constructions, all suggest that the subjects have not yet incorporated into their thinking the basic singular/plural distinctions of standard English.

Another basic distinction characteristic of standard English is the mass noun versus count noun distinction. The frequent omission of articles, the inclusion of superfluous articles and the use of incorrect plural forms and plural constructions suggest that this distinction too has not yet been assimilated by the subjects.

Finally, the masculine/feminine distinction (not the concept of masculinity versus femininity but that of gender as a grammatically relevant distinction) characteristic of standard English has apparently not been assimilated by some of the subjects. That this is the case suggested by their confusion in the use of masculine and feminine third person singular pronouns.

Although these three distinctions are basic to standard English, they are structurally irrevelant or only marginally relevant in many languages including Philippine languages. Perhaps then the disregard for these distinctions as manifested by the error types mentioned above is an effect of the subjects' varied language background.

C. Structural Complexity Studies

Most studies on the English used by Filipino children focus on the errors. One recent study in the Philippines centered mostly on structural complexity.

Mendiola's study on the written language (English) of children from grades 4 through 6 utilized the mean length of the T-unit and a taxonomy of structural descriptions to measure the pupils' linguistic competence. A T-unit is defined as a syntactic unit made up of one main clause with its subordinate construction(s). A coordinate sentence which consists of two main clauses is counted as having two T-units.

Language samples were taken from one hundred and fifty children, fifty each from grades four through six in the Philippine Normal College Laboratory Elementary School in the school year 1976-1977. The written samples used consisted of children's story versions of two short films, "The Story of Ping" and "Millions of Cats." Each film was shown to the subjects twice to ensure good coverage of the content.

Some of the findings of the study are as follows:

1. Grammatical Structures

a. The Noun Phrase Construction

It seems that although most of the different structures of the noun phrase were present in the data of all three grades, those structures used by grades five and six were more complex than those employed by grade four. This finding was primarily indicated by an increasing number of phrase and clause modifiers in the noun phrase structure of the former.

b. Kinds of Sentence Pattern

Found to be the most predominantly used pattern was the N Vt N; followed by N Vi; N V to be Adj: N V to be N3; There V to be N.

c. Kinds of Sentences According to Clause Structure

Of 1,779 grammatical T-units, 85% were simple sentences, 10% complex sentences and 5% compound sentences. The compound-complex sentence was not present in the written work of the children.

2. Syntactic Complexity of Grammatical Structures

The length of minimal terminable units increased significantly with advance in grade level.

3. Grammatical Correctness of Structures

Of the total T-unit output covering the grade level range, only 24% was found grammatical. This shows that the subjects under study have only partially acquired the structures of the English language on the sentential level. The number of grammatical T-units increased with advance in grade level. The most frequent grammatical error at all grade levels was the use of the wrong tense. The use of wrong prepositions and the preponderance of the so-called and sentences ranked second.

D. Discourse Analysis Studies

I am aware of only one study on Filipino child discourse. In her master's thesis, Chou-Allender described the developmental aspects of a child's questions mainly from the perspective of their functions in discourse. The object of the study was to examine samples of a child's spontaneous interaction with adults in a second language for evidence of his ability to assert control over these interactions. The analysis focuses on the development of the child's skills in the use of questions and summons items. These two types of utterances have an interval mechanism for generating talk by selecting the next speaker and obliging him to give a response.

Some of the findings of this study are:

1. After three months in Hawaii, the subject (4;1) rejected his home language language (Tagalog) and quickly acquired two varieties of English: Standard English (SE) and Hawaiian Creole (HC). Peer acceptance and maternal reinforcement were pointed to as the factors behind the subjects' choice to concentrate on the acquisition of English despite his exposure to a bilingual situation.

2. By age 4; 11 (after one year in Hawaii) the child had attained a systematic and diversified use of the speaker-selects-next technique, which enabled him to assert conversational control by assigning roles and demanding a response using simple grammatical instructions.

3. The developmental forms of the child's questions trace a pattern similar to that described for first language learners. His constructions fit the Klima-Bellugi (1969) characterization for Stages 2 and 3 as well as Brown's categories of preposed questions (1968). The subject made frequent use of truncated questions (e.g., this? where?); his yes-no questions were marked principally by a rising intonation pattern; his WH questions reflected three types of construction: (1) preposing weak, e.g., "What [do] you want?" (2) preposing strong, e.g., "Why this is your ball-pen?" and (3) adult-like SE constructions, e.g., "Who's that?" Most likely the last example is a holophrastic form or a phrase learned as an unanalyzed unit.

4. There is no clear evidence of any direct interference from the subjects' first language (Tagalog).

IV. Conclusion

In summary, very little research has been done on either first or second language acquisition in the Philippines. In America, most of the studies in Filipino language acquisition are of a very superficial nature, mostly morpheme analyses.

The Philippines is an excellent laboratory for future studies on language acquisition because of its multilinguistic context. Within the country itself, research on the nature of Filipino acquisition of a second language is top priority because about 60 to 70 percent of the Filipinos are non-Tagalog native speakers. Three-fourths of the Philippine population will benefit from such a study.

Unlike English, which is acquired sequentially, most non-Tagalogs learn two Philippine languages simultaneously--one at home, while the other (Pilipino), though also learned at home, is taught in school and spoken in the community as well. Research in early childhood bilingualism in a Philippine situation should be most revealing.

Finally, for the development of a general theory of second language learning, the Philippine data can be used to determine if there are universals in second language acquisition. Most of the second language studies cited in the literature concern learning English in English-speaking communities. As discussed earlier, learning English in a Philippine context is different from acquiring it in America, where the learner is surrounded by an English-speaking environment. Will comparative research produce the same or different results on the nature of second language acquisition? Then, too, it would be important to find out if the order of language acquisition would be the same if a non-English second language were studied, such as Pilipino.

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